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Frederick County Health Department

News Release

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RED RIBBON WEEK PROMOTES PERSONAL ACTION AND COMMITMENT TO PREVENT DRUG USE

FREDERICK, MD -- “It’s up to ME to be DRUG FREE” is the theme for this year’s Red Ribbon Week campaign, the oldest and largest drug prevention program in the nation reaching millions of young people every year. Red Ribbon Week is an opportunity for young people, parents, families, and communities to take a stand against illegal drug use, and to demonstrate a personal commitment to a drug-free lifestyle. Red Ribbon Week will be recognized and celebrated across the nation from October 23 through October 31.

Red Ribbon Week honors the memory of Enrique (Kiki) Camarena, a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agent who was tortured and killed in 1985 while investigating a major drug cartel in Mexico. The Red Ribbon Week campaign is a national movement to present a unified and visible commitment toward the creation of a drug-free society.

While drug use trends continue to fluctuate from year to year, prevention

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Page 2/Red Ribbon Week

efforts such as Red Ribbon Week continue to have a positive effect. “Drug prevention attempts to impact peoples’ personal, familial and societal experiences that influence their perceptions, decisions, and behaviors related to alcohol and drug use,” states Todd Crum, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Supervisor with the Frederick County Health Department. “Campaigns like Red Ribbon Week are effective because they provide an opportunity to promote the message of living drug-free,” Crum continues.

Everyone has a role to play in preventing drug use in our communities. Children and teens are encouraged to seek positive peer groups and be active in positive activities such as the arts, athletics, and youth groups. Parents are encouraged to demonstrate positive behaviors, to set clear and consistent expectations of appropriate behavior, and to talk early and often about the dangers of drug use and the benefits of healthy decision-making. Providing opportunities to become involved in positive activities, a consistent “no-use” message, and effective public policy and enforcement are key community roles.

To learn more about Red Ribbon Week please visit www.nfp.org. Tips for parents, conversation starters, and resources can be found at www.drugfree.org. Tips for youth and inspiring stories from other drug-free teens can be found at www.abovetheinfluence.com.

To learn more about the services and programs provided by the Frederick County Health Department, please visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov.

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